



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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Subject: Japanese Flour Technicians Study Montana Wheat

Representatives from Japan's four largest flour mills arrive in Bozeman on August 22, 2006 to learn about the quality of Montana's wheat varieties and the 2006 crop. The trade delegation will be hosted by Montana wheat producers through their check-off organization, the Montana Wheat and Barley Committee, which is attached to the Montana Department of Agriculture.

The group will be accompanied by an official from U.S. Wheat Associates based in Tokyo. The Wheat and Barley Committee is a member of U.S. Wheat Associates, which develops export markets on behalf of American wheat farmers by offering assistance to buyers, government officials, millers, and bakers in more than 100 countries.

While in Montana, the foreign visitors will meet with the spring and winter wheat breeders on the Montana State University campus to discuss wheat varietal development and future breeding plans.

Focusing on the technical interests of this team, Kim Falcon, Executive Vice President of the Montana Wheat & Barley Committee, will give an overview of the wheat industry in Montana and will initiate discussions on crop chemical usage and tolerance levels and food safety issues. The trade team will also learn of quality factors that influence noodle color, since much of the hard red winter wheat Japan purchases is used to manufacture noodles. Rounding out the activities will be a tour of the Cereal Quality Laboratory on the MSU campus.

Japan currently buys approximately six million metric tons, or 220,440,000 bushels, of imported wheat from only three countries: the United States, Canada and Australia. The United States has about 55 percent of this market but is constantly working to maintain its advantage.

Trade visits such as this help develop close working relations and a mutual reliance on the science necessary to address grain quality issues, according to Falcon.